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ABSTRACT

A study examined the effects of peer evaluation on writing fluency and writing attitudes. Subjects, 177 ninth grade students from seven classrooms, were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Subjects in both groups wrote a first draft of a paper. Those in the experimental group then received peer evaluation training and rewrote their papers based on assistance from their peer evaluation group. Subjects in the control group rewrote their papers receiving assistance from the teacher only when they asked for help with specific areas. Subjects also completed pretests and posttests that measured their attitudes toward writing. Writing fluency was measured by a word count on the first and last drafts. The results showed a significant overall increase in positive attitudes toward writing in the experimental group, and that females in both groups showed a more positive attitude toward writing than males on both the pretest and the posttest. There was, however, a decrease in word count from the first to the last draft in the experimental group, suggesting that rather than helping the writers to feel more at ease and to expand their writing, peer evaluation might have helped the experimental subjects refine and tighten their writing. (HTH)

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THE EFFECTS OF PEER EVALUATION ON ATTITUDE TOWARD WRITING AND WRITING FLUENCY OF NINTH GRADE STUDENTS

by

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Abstract

A total of 177 ninth grade students participated in a study designed to determine the effects of peer evaluation on attitude toward writing and writing fluency. Seven intact classrooms from three different teachers were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups so that each teacher had one class in treatment. The treatment consisted of both experimental and control groups writing a first draft of a paper. The experimental group then received peer evaluation training and rewrote their papers based on assistance from their peer evaluation group. The control group rewrote their papers receiving assistance from the teacher only when they asked for help with specific areas. The subjects were asked to complete two instruments both pre and post that measured their attitude toward writing. Attitude I, a 15 item instrument was constructed by this researcher and Attitude II, the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students - WASS, was used as a second measure. Writing fluency was measured by a word count on the first and last draft. The results showed a significant overall increase in positive attitudes toward writing in the experimental group. Moreover, scores on individual items of the instruments showed a consistent increase in mean scores in the experimental group. In addition, females in both the experimental and control groups showed a more positive attitude toward writing than males both pre and post. There was, however, a decrease in word count from the first to the last draft

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Context of the Problem

By the time that students enter high school, most of them have been sufficiently trained to hate writing. Although research has shown that 90% of all children come to school believing that they can write, they have learned through years of public schooling that most of the time their written efforts come back to them marked with a sea of red. According to Elizabeth Haynes (1978) students from the early grades through high school write compositions "with the a priori knowledge that the correction of errors will follow." (p.82) Blount (1973) commented that in the National Study of High School English Programs only 15.7% of class time emphasized composition and of that instruction, most of it centered on proofreading papers and corrections.

This kind of negative reinforcement over the years has produced a severe case of writer's block. At the mere mention of a writing assignment, groans and fears are loud and clear. "I can't write," says one student. "I can't write the way the teacher likes," complains another. "I'm just no good at writing," laments a shy, sensitive boy. And from many can be heard, "Why do we always have to write?" With these kinds of attitudes, it becomes an increasingly monumental effort for the student to get words on the paper. And by the time he enters ninth grade, he is convinced he cannot write and surely has nothing worthwhile to say.

As a high school teacher of literature and composition, I have wanted not only to stop the groans but also to show the student that writing can be enjoyable, productive and most of all that it is not an activity to be feared. Over the years I have tried many techniques, but it was not until I participated in the National Writing Project that I found the approach to writing for which I had been searching. This approach to writing focuses on the process rather than the product. It is an approach that supplies the student with the necessary tools before he begins the process. It is an approach that emphasizes audience, voice, and peer evaluation.

Peer evaluation is an area that intrigues me. I know that when I have to read my writing to my colleagues, I work harder on it. Macrorie (1980) says "when you know that what you write is going to be listened to attentively by a number of your peers in a place where the expectation of first-rate performance is high, both your conscious and unconscious go to work for you with more power than usual." (p. 150)

I wondered if this could work for ninth graders. Would they work harder if they knew they were going to read their papers to their peers for comments and help? Would this translate into enthusiasm for writing? Would it improve their attitudes toward writing? Armed with peer comments, would they be encouraged to work with their writing? Would it ease the anxiety of feeling "I don't have anything to say!" Would it eliminate the accumulated

years of writer's block?

I wondered if peer evaluation might be able to supply some satisfactory answers for those questions and in the process make writing an enjoyable activity for students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether peer evaluation can improve attitude toward writing and increase the writing fluency of ninth grade students.

Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses have been posed for this study of peer evaluation.

Hypothesis I There is no significant difference between ninth grade students who peer evaluate and students who do not peer evaluate on a measure of attitude toward writing.

Hypothesis II There is no significant difference between ninth grade students who peer evaluate and students who do not peer evaluate on a measure of writing fluency.

CHAPTER II

Review of Related Literature

"Research has shown that 90% of all children come to school believing that they can write." (Calkins, 1979, p. 11) Yet as early as third grade that belief begins to crumble. Rather than approaching writing wrecklessly, the way they approach childhood games, and rather than experiencing joy in writing, the child becomes worried over form, margins and making the story sound right. This kind of "word by word writing [worrying over mechanics, spelling and form] probably destroys fluency." (Calkins, 1979, p. 33)

As this destruction continues through each grade, the student eventually enters high school unable to get words down on paper and sure that he cannot write.

Kirby and Liner (1981) suggest that educators learn about encouraging written fluency from the way young children acquire oral language. The acquisition process for written expression and oral expression involve the same kind of synthesis. Young children enjoy producing oral language, and they experience many successes in the acquisition. All through the child's formative years parents function as positive reinforcement and the success rate for acquisition of oral language speaks for itself. The success rate for written expression, however, is not nearly so impressive. In fact most students, although fluent talkers (Zoellner, 1969), by the time they reach high school have had so many discouraging experiences with writing that they have a great deal of difficulty

with written expression.

What seems to be most important in developing and maintaining fluency is the establishment of a climate of trust within the classroom and between student writer and evaluator. As teachers respond positively, "students who are scared of writing begin to increase the length of their efforts, and those puny six-to-ten lines of timid prose become longer and more forceful." (Beaven, 1977, p. 139) Honest positive comments motivate students to write more, yet the power of positive reinforcement has been forgotten as the teacher seems all too ready to wield the red pen.

Stevens (1973) found that students who received only positive commentary on their papers over a ten week period developed a more positive attitude toward writing than those who received negative commentary. (cited in Beaven, 1977, p. 137)

deCharms (1968) found that "changes in motives are more likely to occur in an interpersonal atmosphere in which the individual feels warmly but honestly supported and respected." (cited in Beaven, 1977, p. 146)

Using the King Construct Scale to measure attitudes toward writing, King (1979) found that as student writers progress from one writing situation to another, they form attitudes based on how they interpret what has happened to them, what is happening to them, and what might happen to them in any future writing situation. (p. 20) Healy (1980) agrees that "attitudes of student

writers in our classes now are the sum of all that has happened to their writing in the past." (p. 6)

Attitudes formed within a positive climate of trust and reinforcement are ones that encourage writing fluency. These attitudes can be enhanced through the use of peer groups. The peer group is a powerful motivator in a teenager's life. It is one that can be used positively to influence attitudes toward writing. As a student learns how to function within the peer evaluation group, he develops a sense of self. The student becomes accepted as an important part of the group as he/she helps others with their writing. Beaven (1977) suggests that "As the dynamics of the small group continue to work, peers develop a sense of trust, group inclusion, support and acceptance." (p. 152) This translates into a positive attitude toward the task at hand, writing. The peer evaluation group supplies that need for affiliation and achievement that McClelland et al (1953) have identified as necessary for achievement motivation.

Giving students opportunities to share early drafts with classmates before they submit papers for a grade can decrease the fear of failure that can lead to writer's block. Lucy McCormick Calkins in the Atikinson School Research (1979) observed that third graders who told their stories aloud to a peer, were able to move beyond the writer's block that occasionally plagued them. Students often respond favorably to critical comments from their peers if

done in a positive and constructive atmosphere.

King (1979) found that "allowing time for peer interaction and formulation of ideas may result in better attitudes toward writing." (p.18)

Research supports the fact that young people's judgments are influenced more by their peers than their teachers. (Campbell, 1964, p. 315) Pierson (1967), however, in a study of 153 ninth graders found no significant difference between peer and conventional methods of correcting writing on a measure of the STEP Essay and STEP Writing Test. The researcher, however, suggested that "the STEP Essay Test be brought up to date, that readers obtain a high practice coefficient of reliability before judging test essays, and that better techniques be developed for measuring the substance and style of writing." (p. 2)

Although there were no significant gains recorded, Pierson comments in the discussion section that "participants also reported that the atmosphere of peer method classes was characterized by an esprit de corps, an enthusiasm, an independence of thought, and an amount of noise that were not evident in the conventional classes." (p. 85) It is this esprit de corps and enthusiasm that, in part, makes the peer group such an invaluable tool in the writing process. Alvina T. Burrows (1959) observed that "In classes in which stories are joyously shared, the pupils write more and better." (p. 21) In the Atkinson model (1979) Calkins found that the peer conference or evaluation was an ongoing process that

occurred many times informally with the topic choice and continued on through the writing process to a more formal extended evaluation when the draft was completed. The researchers saw these peer evaluations increase fluency and improve the writer's attitude toward writing. The most important other in a teenager's life is his peers, and the peer evaluation group, therefore, provides powerful motivation.

There are a few other studies that involved peer evaluation, but with most of them the results were measured on objective tests rather than on their effect on attitude toward writing or their effect on fluency. In addition, in these studies peer evaluation was often coupled with another independent variable, so it was difficult to tell which variable made the difference.

Maize (1954) compared Purdue freshmen who wrote frequently and had peer correction with freshmen who wrote infrequently with teacher correction. He found the experimental group who wrote frequently with peer correction made statistically significant gains in mean scores on essay tests and on the objective Rinsland-Beck Test.

In a five week study of freshmen at Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Boyet (1955) found no significant difference between mean scores of groups on essay tests or on the objective Barret-Rejan-Schrammel English Test between students who had peer evaluated and those whose papers had been evaluated by conventional methods.

In a ten week study Sutton and Allen (1964) compared peer correction with conventional correction and no correction with groups of freshmen at Stetson University. They found no statisically significant difference between the means of the groups on a measure of essays or objective tests: College Entrance Examination Board English Composition Test and the Cooperative Test.

Dow (1973) devised a model to use with tenth graders that utilizes individualized learning and peer group evaluation. He found in a fifteen week study that the experimental group made significant gains in organization, critical thinking, overall appropriateness and sentence revision. His conclusion was that peer evaluation is at least as effective as traditional teacher evaluation in those areas.

Since the research and my observations in the classroom point to the power of group dynamics and its positive effect on teenagers in particular, it would seem logical to test the effect that peer evaluation has on fluency and attitude toward writing. The research to this date has not attempted to measure this effect. This study attempts to do that.

CHAPTER III

Procedures Followed and Materials Used

This research study was designed to measure the effect of peer group evaluation on writing fluency and attitude toward writing of ninth grade students.

Description of the Research Design

The research design was quasi-experimental, non equivalent control group design. This study was a mixed design 2x2x3x2 with repeated measures on the dependent variable. The design had three independent variables: group with two levels, experimental and control; sex with two levels; and teacher with three levels. The three dependent variables were fluency, Attitude I instrument and Attitude II instrument.

Seven intact classes were used and were randomly assigned to treatment and control. Three teachers were used. Two teachers each had one ninth grade class randomly assigned to treatment and one class randomly assigned to control. The third teacher had three ninth grade classes, and two were randomly assigned to treatment and one was randomly assigned to control. This design provided for control within teachers and across teachers.

Description of the Sample

The sample was taken from a rapidly growing white suburban upper middle class high school which had an enrollment of approximately 1450. The English department at this high school groups students in Basic, Regular and Honors classes based on a writing sample,

reading scores and a teacher recommendation. For the school year 1984-85 during which this study was conducted, there were two basic sections, eleven regular sections, and three honors sections. The sample was selected from the regular sections.

The sample of 177 students included 89 males and 88 females. Of the 108 students in the experimental groups, 50 were males and 58 were females. Of the 69 students in the control group, 39 were males and 30 were females.

On a measure of the Cognitive Abilities Test, the mean score for the sample was 110.3841 with a standard deviation of 10. On a measure of the Iowa Silent Reading Test, the mean score for Test 1 - Reading Vocabulary was 6.1029 with a standard deviation of 1.2643; the mean score for Test 2 - Reading Comprehension was 5.9086 with a standard deviation of 1.5134. The mean scores from both the Cognitive Abilities Test and the Iowa Silent Reading Test placed the students in this sample in the average range.

Description of the Instruments

Two instruments were used to measure pre and post attitude toward writing.

Attitude I This measure was an instrument constructed by this researcher for the purpose of this study. (see Appendix A) It is a 15 item questionnaire with 12 positive and three negative items. It purposely has a four point Likert scale in order to force students to respond either positively or negatively.

The scale ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A student can score as low as 15 or as high as 60 on the scale. The following table will assist in the scoring process.

TABLE 1

Scoring of Items on Attitude I

Response	Response Value
Positive Items: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15	4 3 2 1
Negative Items: 2, 4, 9	1 2 3 4

Attitude I was constructed after research failed to yield an instrument that asked the kinds of questions that this researcher wanted to ask. While all of the questions evaluate the student's attitude toward writing, questions nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, and fourteen deal specifically with an evaluation of the peer evaluation process. The questions grew out of a brainstorming session between the English department chairperson, the director of curriculum and this researcher (all from the same school district), all of whom had completed training in the National Writing Project. The instrument

was norm tested in four sophomore classes that had been peer evaluating for almost two years. In order to test the validity of the positive and negative items, the students were asked to respond to the questions as they thought the English teacher would ideally want them to respond. Their responses substantiated the validity of the positive and negative questions. In addition, Dr. Nona Tollefson, professor of educational psychology at the University of Kansas, responded to the instrument and after some adjustments was satisfied with its validity.

Attitude II instrument was the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students (WASS). (see Appendix B) This instrument was constructed in 1979 by Janet Emig and Barbara King and was designed for junior and senior high students. Its purpose was to assess students' attitudes toward writing. WASS, a revision of the Emig Writing Attitude Scale (Student Version), was constructed in 1977 for the New Jersey Writing Project. Twenty-five teachers and 1600 students participated in that study. The scale on the revised version was constructed after revisions were suggested by graduate education students and secondary English teachers. The revised scale contains 40 items divided into three clusters: preference for writing, perception of writing, and process of writing. It has a five point Likert scale ranging from almost always to almost never. Pre and post cluster scores indicate if there has been a change in each cluster as a whole. According to Emig-King, the preference cluster, however, is the only one of the three that will

also indicate the direction of the change, whether the subject's preference for writing has increased or decreased. For this reason this study will deal only with the results from the preference cluster. As the preference cluster score moves closer to five, the greater the preference for writing.

In order to interpret changes in perception and process clusters, the items on the scale must be analyzed individually because these two clusters cover a wide range of behaviors. For the purpose of this study, items three, nine, thirty and thirty-three were chosen for analysis both pre and post. These items deal specifically with behaviors or attitudes that might be affected by the peer evaluation process. The following table will assist in the scoring process.

TABLE 2

Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students

	Clusters
Preference for Writing:	1, 2, 4, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 25, 29, 34, 39, 40
Perception of Writing:	8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 21, 23, 24, 26, 28, 31, 32, 35, 36, 38
Process of Writing:	3, 5, 7, 14, 20, 27, 30, 33, 37,
Not Categorized:	6

Cronbach alpha reliabilities for the subscales of the WASS are as follows: perception .589; process .726 and preference .716. Process of writing and preference for writing values seem to be approaching good reliability. This researcher included WASS as a second measure of attitude toward writing so that this study would have a second measure of attitude, one that had been used in other research studies.

This researcher has tried to obtain more specific information on the results of the original study or any subsequent studies that have used this instrument. A request through the University of Kansas library indicated that none of the 400 libraries affiliated with their interlibrary loan system had purchased the document dealing with the Emig-King instrument. A mail and phone request to the researcher, Barbara King, supplied only the scoring information and not the research document or the results of the original study. This researcher realizes that she should have the results of the study that originally used this instrument; however, time and financial restraints have prevented this.

One measure for writing fluency, a count of words, was used for this study. Although this researcher realizes that number of words does not necessarily equal quality writing, it does represent an accomplishment for students who have been afraid to write and who think that they cannot write due to years of discouraging writing situations in school.

Procedure

For the reader to have an understanding of the type of classrooms in which the experiment took place, it is necessary to outline the kinds of writing situations that the students had experienced prior to the study. Students had been writing journals on a weekly basis since the beginning of the school year, September 1984. These journals represented personal writing on topics of the students' choice. A page a week was written outside of class. The teacher responded to content only. This journal approach encourages writing fluency by removing the fear associated with the correction of mechanical errors. It also encourages a trusting student/teacher relationship as the teacher becomes acquainted with the student on a more personal level.

The journal writing continued on a weekly basis for several months before the study was conducted. The unit that specifically led to this study was a unit on "Understanding People That Are Different Than We Are." The unit began with a visit from Trudy Lounds, the hearing impaired teacher for Shawnee Mission schools. Two profoundly deaf students and an interpreter came along. The students in the study heard a factual presentation on deafness, saw an interpreter, and conversed with the hearing impaired students. The visit served as a way to sensitize students to people who are different than they. One student

comment seems to sum up the value of the visit. "I never thought I'd know what to say to someone like that. Now I know they're just like me!"

The unit continued with a reading of The Miracle Worker and continued on to a library search of famous people who had overcome disabilities.

The unit continued with the viewing in class of an ABC After School Special, Welcome Home Jellybean. This is the story of a family who brings a retarded thirteen-year-old child back into the home to live. The film shows the adjustments the family, in particular a fifteen-year-old boy, must make as they cope with this situation. The students responded orally and in informal written form to the film. In this way the film served as a prewriting experience and is referred to later on in the study. The students were now ready for the research study to begin.

The following is the procedure followed for each day of the study.

Day 1

In both experimental and control groups the attitude instruments I and II were administered. Students were instructed to answer honestly.

Students were instructed to be thinking about a situation in which they have dealt with or have overcome a problem or a disability. They were instructed to come to class the next day with a specific incident in mind as they would be writing a

personal narrative on how they overcame or dealt with that problem or disability. The teacher brainstormed with the students to generate ideas. The teacher gave a description of a problem/ disability as it appears on the memory chain to be used the next day. (see Appendix C) Students were reminded of the disabilities Helen Keller had overcome in The Miracle Worker and the problems the young protagonist in Welcome Home Jellybean had overcome. Possible topics were brainstormed and put on the board. A model written from the same directives the students would receive and using the same memory chain the students would use was read to the students. (see Appendix D)

Day 2

In both the experimental and control groups the definition for the disability/problem was reviewed. The criteria for the writing sample was handed out and the teacher went over it with the students. (see Appendix E) The teacher then proceeded through the memory chain by asking specific questions, pausing long enough between each question for students to respond in writing. A form of pre-writing, the memory chain helps jog the student's memory about a specific incident by asking questions to which the student responds in writing. This is then used as raw material for writing. Most often students need no prompting to begin writing after having been taken through the memory chain. After going through the memory chain, the teacher instructed students to begin writing

their personal narrative on how they overcame or dealt with a problem/disability. Students continued to write for the rest of the 51 minute class period. The students were instructed to come to class the next day with a completed first draft. Any writing that was not completed in class was to be finished for homework.

Day 3

Both the experimental and the control group counted the number of words on the first draft, and they recorded that number at the top of the paper in addition to recording it on a separate sheet of paper. From this point on the control group and the experimental group differ.

The control group wrote a second draft, receiving help from the teacher based on specific student questions. Students had the entire 51 minute class period to work.

The experimental group began peer evaluation training. This peer evaluation training session with an actual class is available on videotape. The following procedure was viewed by all three teachers before the study began.

The teacher began by establishing the definition, qualifications and responsibilities of a critic. The responsibilities of the writer were also emphasized in this two way process. (see Appendix F for the content of the actual presentation)

The teacher then proceeded to go over the peer response sheet which reemphasized the criteria for the assignment. (see

Appendix G) The students will use this peer response sheet in evaluating other students' work.

Before the students separated into peer evaluation groups, the teacher modeled what should happen in the peer evaluation groups. The teacher, functioning as the model, read his/her paper aloud and guided the students in making appropriate responses both orally and in written form, using the peer response sheet. The teacher emphasized the fact that the students were able to offer constructive comments for the teacher/writer. This practice session gave the students confidence for the job they were about to do with their peers' papers.

Day 4

The control group continued to work on the second draft as needed. They received help from the teacher based on specific student questions. For each day that the experimental group was involved with peer evaluation, the control group was allowed to work on the second draft. The second draft of the students in the control group was to be turned in the same day as the second draft of the students in the experimental group.

The experimental group, using the teacher model which contained errors, received instructions and practiced editing for mechanical and syntax errors. The students used a composition checklist with which they were familiar. (see Appendix H)

The teacher next explained the peer evaluation process in detail to the peer evaluation groups. The process takes

approximately three days to complete. The teacher had previously formed triads, taking into consideration the strengths and weaknesses of the students. These complimentary triads would be each peer evaluation group. (see Appendix I for specific student directions for proceeding through the peer evaluation process.) The teacher emphasized the importance of the writer's first reading their papers orally to the peer evaluation group. This oral reading establishes ownership. In addition the teacher stressed the importance of the two way process in which questions, comments and suggestions flow back and forth between writer and editors. Due to the noise level of reading papers aloud, this part of the process works best in an area in which the triads can spread out. The teacher sat in with the groups giving assistance as needed. After oral and written response to content, students worked on another draft based on feedback from the peer evaluation group.

Day 5

The control group continued to work on the second draft.

The experimental group worked in triads, peer evaluating for mechanical errors. The emphasis was placed first on content; the student revised the draft until it was the best content. Then the emphasis shifted to editing for mechanical errors. The rationale given to the student should be that when the student is pleased with what he has to say in his paper, he will want to be able to communicate that to others without having the

interference of mechanical errors. Each paper was evaluated by both members of the triad.

The final paper, including all drafts and peer response sheets, was due the next day.

Day 6

The papers of both the experimental and control groups were collected on the same day. The students counted the number of words in the final draft before turning it in. The teacher administered the Attitude I and Attitude II instruments.

CHAPTER IV

Results of the Study

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine whether peer evaluation can improve attitude toward writing and increase the writing fluency of ninth grade students.

Two null hypotheses were posed for this study of peer evaluation.

Hypothesis I There is no significant difference between ninth grade students who peer evaluate and students who do not peer evaluate on a measure of attitude toward writing.

Hypothesis II There is no significant difference between ninth grade students who peer evaluate and students who do not peer evaluate on a measure of writing fluency.

This chapter reports the analysis of variance for the three dependent variables as well as the means and standard deviation for individual items on Attitude I and Attitude II instruments. The three dependent variables were Attitude I instrument, Attitude II instrument, and writing fluency.

The Results of the Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis I

Attitude I The first analysis was a 3x2x2 analysis of covariance. The dependent variable in this analysis was attitude toward writing which was measured by Attitude I. Table 3 presents a summary for this analysis of covariance. Inspection of the data in Table 3

Table 3

Source Table for the Analysis of Covariance for the Attitude I Instrument

Source	SS	DF	MS	F
Covariates	4337.27	3	1445.76	106.42*
R Voc	68.93	1	68.93	5.07*
R Comp	33.94	1	33.94	2.50
Pre Att I	4324.23	1	4324.23	318.29*
Main Effects	483.61	4	120.90	8.90
Teacher	35.70	2	17.85	1.31
Sex	333.40	1	333.40	24.54*
Group	92.50	1	92.50	6.80*
2-Way Interaction	215.74	5	43.15	3.18
Teacher/sex	131.37	2	65.68	4.84*
Teacher/group	81.05	2	40.53	2.98
Sex/group	0.18	1	0.18	0.01
3-Way Interaction	88.40	2	44.20	3.25*
Teacher/sex/group	88.40	2	44.20	3.25*
Residual	2105.83	155	13.59	
Total	7230.85	169	42.79	

*$p < .05$

shows that at the pre-specified alpha level of .05, there was a significant effect for the covariate reading vocabulary but not for reading comprehension. Pre test means are included as Appendix J.

In the main effect the means for both group and sex showed a significant effect. The experimental group scored significantly higher (38.45) than the control group (36.47) on the post Attitude I instrument. This difference is greater than one would expect by chance alone, so the null hypothesis was rejected.

A signficant effect for sex was also found [F (1,169) = 24.54, $p < .05$]. Inspection of the data shows that girls scored significantly higher (40.54) than boys (34.82) on the post Attitude I instrument.

In the two way interaction between teacher and group there was not a significant effect but the F-ratio (2.98) was approaching significance at .054. Figure 1 represents the means for that interaction and inspection of the data represented there shows that although there was not a statistically significant effect, the experimental group scored higher than the control group for all three teachers. The difference, however, between the mean scores of the students in the experimental and control groups taught by teachers one and three was significantly greater than the difference between the mean scores of the students in the experimental and control groups taught by teacher two.

In the two way interaction between teacher and sex, there was a significant effect. Figure 2 presents the means for that interaction. Inspection of the data in Figure 2 shows that for all three teachers, females scored significantly higher than males

Figure 1. Post Attitude I Mean Scores by Teacher for Experimental and Control Groups.

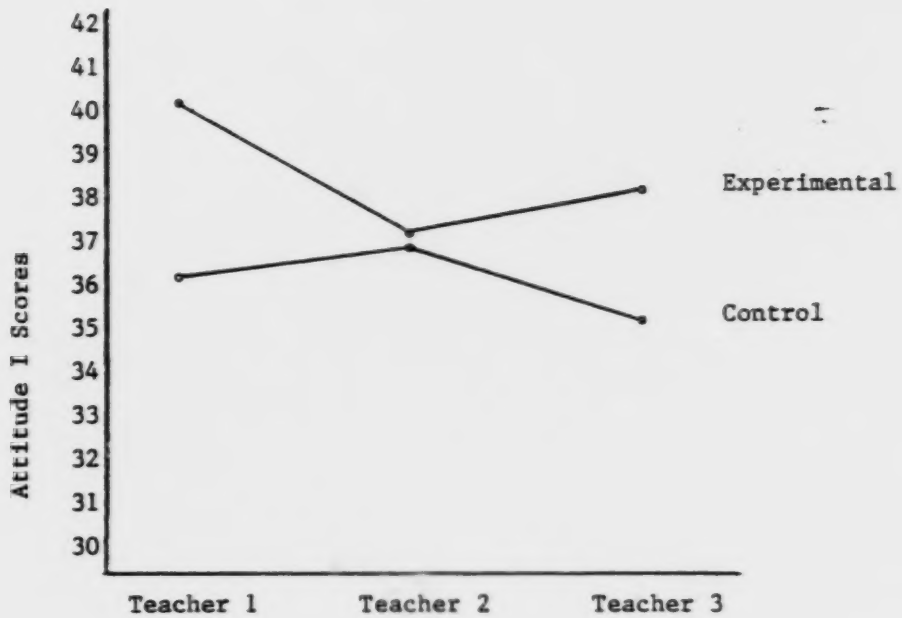
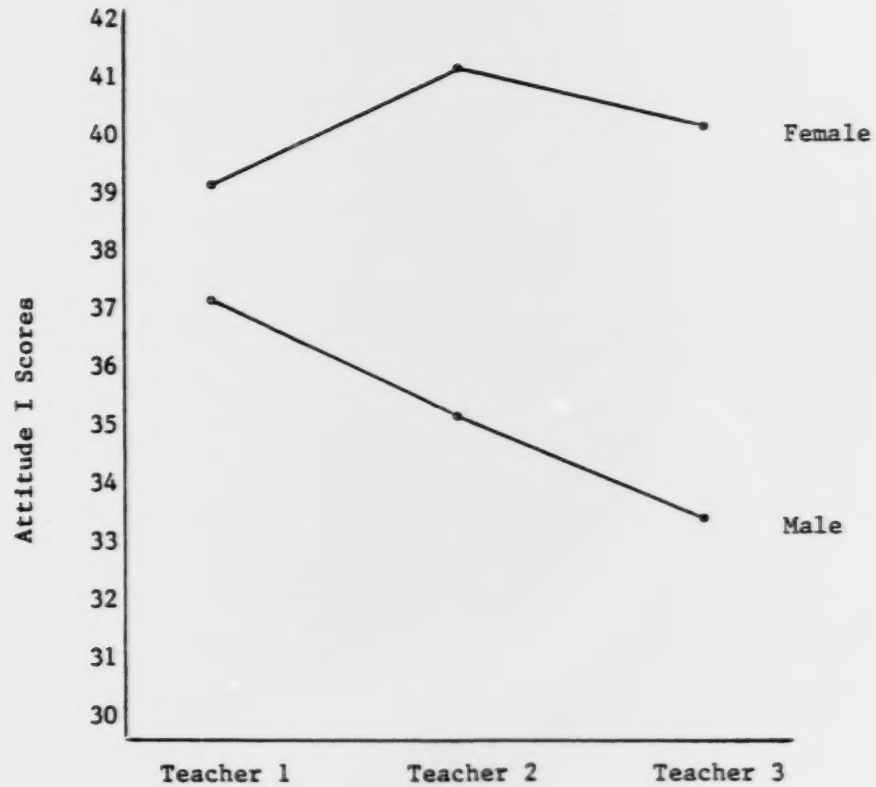


Figure 2. Post Attitude I Means for Teacher/sex Interaction



on post Attitude I scores.

In the three way interaction there was a significant effect between teacher, sex and group. Table 4 presents the means and standard deviation for the Attitude I scores for male and female students in the experimental and control groups instructed by teachers one, two and three. Inspection of the data in Table 4 shows that male and female students in the experimental groups of teachers one and three show significantly higher scores on the post Attitude I instrument than do the males and females in the control groups. The scores of the males and females in the control group of teacher two are somewhat, though not significantly, higher than the scores of the males and females in the experimental group. Further inspection of the data in Table 4 show that in both the experimental and control groups for teachers one, two and three, females scored significantly higher than males. Table 4 also shows that the standard deviations for the control groups of teachers one, two and three are consistently higher than the standard deviations for the experimental groups of teacher one, two and three. The only exception is for the females in the control group of teacher one.

The second analysis of this study was measurement of the pre and post means and standard deviation of the individual items on the Attitude I instrument. Table 5 presents a summary table of this data. For the purpose of this study, the means of items one, two, four, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, and

Table 4

Post test Means and Standard Deviation for Attitude I Scores for Male and Female Students in the Experimental and Control Groups Instructed by Teachers 1, 2 and 3.

		Experimental		Control	
		$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s
Teacher 1	M	40.22	6.22	33.50	9.85
	F	40.00	5.37	38.75	4.56
Teacher 2	M	34.73	5.69	35.47	6.07
	F	40.83	5.75	41.86	6.84
Teacher 3	M	34.42	5.00	31.93	6.87
	F	41.48	4.85	39.50	6.00

fifteen will be presented because those items represented the desired change in attitude following peer evaluation.

Item one, I find writing a pleasant task, shows a decrease in the experimental group from a pre test means of 2.72 to a post test means of 2.66. The control group shows a slight increase from a pre test means of 2.41 to a post test means of 2.42.

Item two, I avoid writing, if possible, shows a decrease in the experimental group from a pre test means of 2.68 to a post test means of 2.61. The mean of the control group, however, shows a more substantial decrease from a pre test means of 2.58 to a post test means of 2.41.

Item four, I become frightened when I have to write, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 3.14 to a post test means of 3.20. The control group means shows no change, staying at 2.94.

Item nine, I complete a writing assignment one time only and do no revising, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 3.10 to a post test means of 3.12. The control group, however, also increased from a pre test means of 3.07 to a post test means of 3.10.

Item ten, I rewrite a writing assignment one or more times, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 3.02 to a post test means of 3.10. The control group, however, also increased from a pre test means of 2.99 to a post test means of 3.18.

Table 5

Source Table for the Pre and Post Means and Standard Deviation of the Individual Items on the Attitude I Instrument.

Item	Experimental				Control			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s
1.	2.72	.68	2.66	.71	2.41	.79	2.42	.85
2.	2.68	.76	2.61	.76	2.58	.83	2.41	.82
3.	2.67	.97	2.56	.92	2.63	.91	2.39	.91
4.	3.14	.75	3.20	.68	2.94	.81	2.94	.81
5.	2.39	.65	2.43	.66	2.30	.86	2.17	.80
6.	2.32	.89	2.20	.83	2.31	.94	2.15	.86
7.	2.07	.91	2.01	.84	2.06	.92	1.93	.91
8.	3.01	.83	2.96	.91	2.84	.98	2.84	1.00
9.	3.10	.67	3.12	.72	3.07	.75	3.10	.67
10.	3.02	.70	3.10	.63	2.99	.78	3.18	.69
11.	2.11	.73	2.18	.76	2.34	.94	2.13	.82
12.	1.96	.65	2.18	.83	1.99	.85	1.91	.74
13.	1.52	.57	1.52	.72	1.59	.67	1.46	.66
14.	2.49	.75	2.63	.68	2.62	.82	2.51	.87
15.	3.05	.55	3.17	.52	3.16	.66	3.16	.64

Item eleven, I like to share my writing with family and friends, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 2.11 to a post test means of 2.18. The control group, however, shows a decrease from a pre test means of 2.34 to a post test means of 2.13.

Item twelve, I like to read my writing to small groups of my classmates, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 1.96 to a post test means of 2.18. The control group shows a decrease from a pre test means of 1.99 to a post test means of 1.91.

Item thirteen, I like to read my writing to the whole class, shows a stable mean of 1.52 in both pre and post of the experimental group. The control group, however, shows a decrease from a pre test means of 1.59 to a post test means of 1.46.

Item fourteen, I like to read classmates' papers and offer advice, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 2.49 to a post test means of 2.63. The control group shows a decrease from a pre test means of 2.62 to a post test means of 2.51.

Item fifteen, I think my writing is improving, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 3.05 to a post test means of 3.17. The control group shows no change with a mean of 3.16 for both pre and post.

Attitude II The third analysis of this study was a 3x2x2 analysis of covariance. The dependent variable in this analysis was attitude

toward writing which was measured by Attitude II, the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students (WASS). Table 6 presents a summary table for this analysis of covariance. Inspection of the data in this table shows that at the pre-specified alpha level of .05, there was a significant effect for the covariate pre Emig-King Attitude II scores.

All main effects and two way interaction show no significant effect but in the three way interaction, there was a significant effect between teacher, sex and group.

Table 7 presents the means and standard deviation for the Attitude II instrument for male and female students in the experimental and control groups instructed by teachers one, two and three. Inspection of the data in Table 7 shows that both male and females in the experimental group of teacher one scored significantly higher means than the male and female students in the control group. The males in the experimental group of teachers one, two and three scored significantly higher than the males in the control groups of teachers one, two and three. The females in the experimental group of teacher two scored significantly lower than the females in the control group; however, the females in the experimental group of teacher three scored only .07 lower than the females in the control group. These differences are greater than one would expect by chance alone, so the null hypothesis was rejected.

The fourth analysis of this study was a measurement of the pre and post means and standard deviation of the three clusters on

Table 6

Source Table for the Analysis of Covariance for Attitude II Instrument-Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students (WASS).

Source	SS	DF	MS	F
Covariates	16400.93	3	5466.98	91.27
R Voc	145.97	1	145.97	2.44
R Comp	73.38	1	73.38	1.23
Pre Att II	16369.02	1	16369.02	273.27*
Main Effects	209.60	4	52.40	0.88
Teacher	186.08	2	93.04	1.55
Sex	0.84	1	0.84	0.01
Group	5.11	1	5.11	0.09
2-Way Interaction	317.81	5	63.56	1.06
Teacher/sex	64.17	2	32.09	0.54
Teacher/group	72.77	2	36.39	0.61
Sex/group	234.24	1	234.24	3.91
3-Way Interaction	592.29	2	296.15	4.94*
Teacher/sex/group	592.29	2	296.15	4.94*
Residual	9284.70	155	59.90	
Total	26805.32	169	158.61	

*$p < .05$

Table 7

Post test Means and Standard Deviation for Attitude II Scores for Male and Female Students in the Experimental and Control Groups Instructed by Teachers 1, 2 and 3.

		Experimental		Control	
		$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s
Teacher 1	M	117.78	11.89	109.50	22.19
	F	111.41	15.35	107.88	9.89
Teacher 2	M	112.00	8.51	107.41	14.08
	F	106.33	11.12	127.43	13.30
Teacher 3	M	109.08	6.71	106.36	10.69
	F	111.93	13.23	112.00	11.62

the Attitude II instrument and specifically items three, nine, thirty and thirty-three. Table 8 presents a summary of that data.

Since the researchers Emig-King indicated that Cluster I, Preference for Writing, was the only cluster that would indicate the direction of change, whether the subject's preference for writing had increased or decreased, this researcher will only present the results from that cluster.

Inspection of the data in Table 8 shows that the means for Cluster I in the experimental group increased from a pre test means of 31.84 to a post test means of 32.49. According to Emig-King, analysis of each cluster must be done by measuring the movement of the cluster score toward five. By dividing the cluster score by the number of items in the cluster, the pre test means for Cluster I was 2.27 and the post test means was 2.32. The movement was toward five and according to Emig-King, this shows a greater preference toward writing.

There also was movement toward five in the Cluster I score of the control group. The movement, however, was only from a pre test score of 2.25 to a post test score of 2.27.

Item three, I voluntarily re-read and revise what I've written, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 3.54 to a post test means of 3.67. The control group shows a decrease from a pre test means of 3.62 to a post test means of 3.59.

Item thirty, I share what I write for school with family

Table 8

Source Table for Pre and Post Test Means and Standard Deviation for Clusters and Individual Items on Attitude II Instrument: Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students (WASS).

Clusters	Experimental				Control			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s
I.	31.84	6.41	32.49	5.99	31.54	7.08	31.81	7.84
II.	48.75	5.73	48.16	5.28	48.75	6.74	48.99	5.15
III.	26.80	6.18	26.79	4.20	26.70	5.01	26.65	4.16
Q3.	3.54	1.09	3.67	1.07	3.62	1.29	3.59	1.31
Q9.	3.53	.93	3.49	.70	3.45	.81	3.51	.92
Q30.	2.22	1.13	2.51	1.17	2.42	1.31	2.32	1.25
Q33.	2.26	.91	2.38	.85	2.25	.88	2.28	.94

and friends, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 2.22 to a post test means of 2.51. The control group shows a decrease from a pre test means of 2.42 to a post test means of 2.32.

Item thirty-three, In class I share what I write with other members of the class, shows an increase in the experimental group from a pre test means of 2.26 to a post test means of 2.38. The control group shows only a slight increase from a pre test mean of 2.25 to a post test mean of 2.28.

The Results of the Statistical Analysis for Hypothesis II

The fifth analysis of this study was a 3x2x2 analysis of covariance. The dependent variable in this analysis was writing fluency which was measured by a count of words in the post test. In this analysis the same three covariates were used: scores on reading vocabulary and reading comprehension, and the first draft count of words.

Table 9 presents a summary table for this analysis of covariance. Inspection of the data in Table 9 shows a significant effect for all covariates; however, all main effects and interactions were not significant at the pre-specified alpha level of .05.

Figure 3 presents the post writing fluency word count means by teacher for the experimental and control groups. Inspection of the data in Figure 3 shows that post test scores for the experimental group were consistently, though not significantly, lower than for the control group. The null hypothesis II, therefore, is not

Table 9

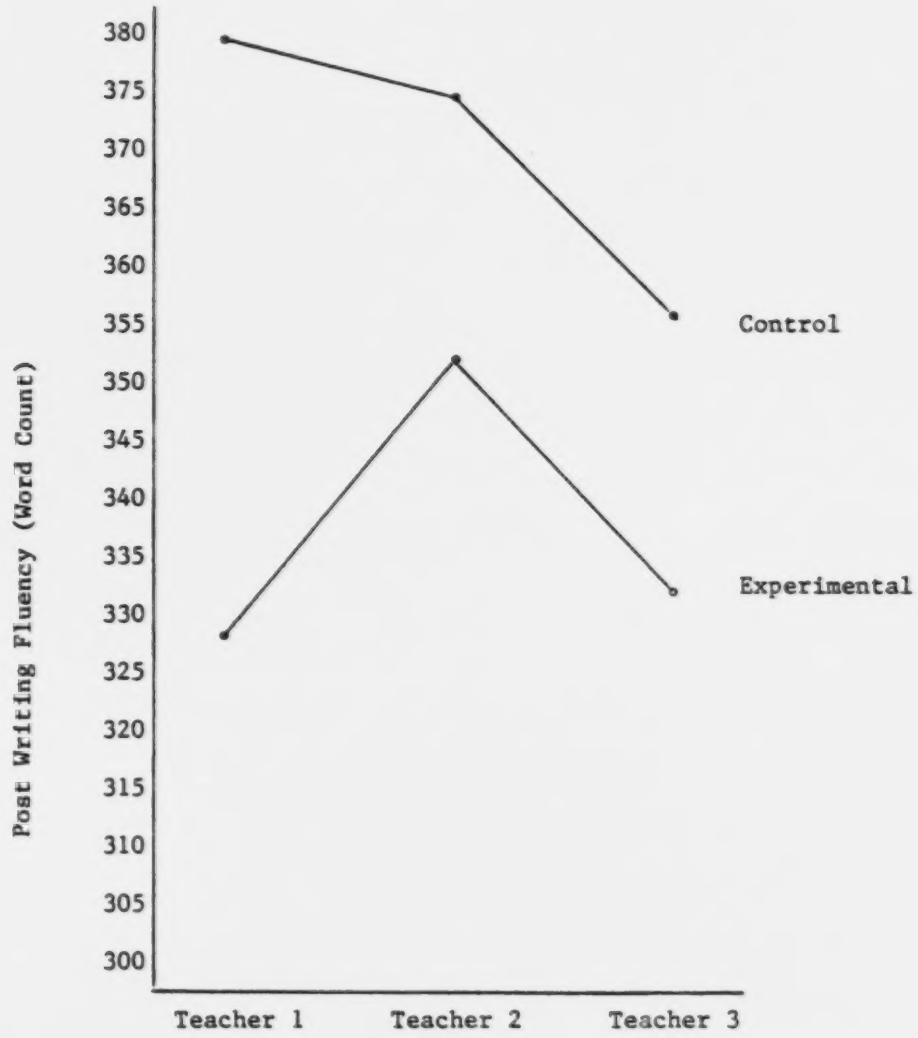
Source Table for the Analysis of Covariance for the Writing Fluency Measure: Word Count.

Source	SS	DF	MS	F
Covariates	1843455.91	3	614485.30	138.66*
R Voc	22044.26	1	22044.26	4.97*
R Comp	27463.24	1	27463.24	6.20*
First Draft	1833486.09	1	1833486.09	413.73*
Main Effects	24357.23	4	6089.31	1.37
Teacher	7037.49	2	3518.75	0.79
Sex	15222.16	1	15222.16	3.44
Group	200.87	1	200.87	0.05
2-Way Interaction	19680.46	5	3936.09	0.89
Teacher/sex	12203.95	2	6101.97	1.38
Teacher/group	6709.95	2	3354.97	0.757
Sex/group	2665.11	1	2665.11	0.60
3-Way Interaction	19471.25	2	9735.62	2.20
Teacher/sex/group	19471.25	2	9735.62	2.20
Residual	686897.21	155	4431.60	
Total	259386.05	169	15348.30	

*$p < .05$

Figure 3.

Post Writing Fluency (Word Count) Means by Teacher for the Experimental and Control Groups.



rejected.

The conclusions to be drawn from these results and the implications for education will be presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, Limitations, and Future Implications

Summary of Procedures

The purpose of this study was to determine whether peer evaluation can improve attitude toward writing and increase the writing fluency of ninth grade students. Seven intact classes, a total of 177 students, from three different teachers were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups so that each teacher had one class in treatment. Both experimental and control groups wrote a first draft of a paper. The experimental group then received peer evaluation training and rewrote their papers based on assistance from their peer evaluation group. The control group rewrote their papers receiving assistance from the teacher only when they asked for help with specific areas. Two instruments were used to measure the student's attitude toward writing both pre and post. Attitude I, a 15 item instrument was constructed by this researcher and Attitude II, the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students - WASS, was used as a second measure. Writing fluency was measured by a word count on the first and last draft.

The results showed a significant overall increase in positive attitudes toward writing in the experimental group. Moreover, scores on individual items of the instruments showed a pattern of increase in mean scores in the experimental group that was not duplicated in the mean scores of the control group. In addition, females in both the experimental and control groups showed a more positive attitude toward writing than males both pre and post.

There was, however, a decrease in word count from the first to the last draft in the experimental group.

Conclusions and Implications

It was hypothesized that the post Attitude I score would be higher for the experimental group than it would be for the control group. It was hypothesized that students who had participated in peer evaluation would develop a more positive attitude toward writing and that this would be reflected in a significantly higher post score.

The statistical results of this study substantiate that hypothesis. The whole sample cell means in the main effect for the experimental group was significantly higher (38.45) than the whole sample cell means for the control group (36.47). This difference is greater than one would expect by chance alone, so the null hypothesis was rejected.

The data in Table 4 supports the strength of the treatment. The higher standard deviation of all the control groups except one indicates less variability in the experimental group and, therefore, substantiates the significant difference produced by peer evaluation.

This is a very important finding which should have a great impact on writing programs in the classroom. As stated in the introduction, teachers are reminded of students' fear and dislike of writing almost every time they give a writing assignment. The groans and fears are sometimes loud and many times bottled up

from years of writing frustration. Teachers have tried many different ways to encourage the student to write without looking to the most powerful motivator in a young person's life, his peer group.

The benefits of a peer evaluation group are many. As the student writer learns how to function within his peer evaluation group, helping other student writers and receiving help with his writing, he develops a sense of self. He becomes an important part of the group. The dynamics of the group translate into a positive attitude toward the task at hand, writing. Students who were previously afraid to write and sure they couldn't write, find positive reinforcement within the group. They want to write better, knowing they will share their writing with their peers.

The findings in this study should encourage every writing teacher to use peer evaluation groups as part of the writing process. Use the young person's most powerful motivator, his peers, as a tool to encourage positive attitudes toward writing. With positive attitudes and students willing to work with their writing, the sky's the limit!

In this study the researcher did not hypothesize about the effect that peer evaluation would have on attitudes of males and females. There was, however, a strong sex effect that ran throughout the results and this researcher feels compelled to discuss those results.

In the main effect females scored significantly higher (40.54)

than males (34.82) on the post Attitude I instrument. This difference is too great to be due to chance alone. In addition, inspection of the pre Attitude I scores in Appendix J shows that females in both the experimental and control groups started the study with a consistently more positive attitude toward writing than males.

In the two-way interaction between teacher and sex, there was also a significant effect. (see figure 4) Females scored significantly higher on a measure of post Attitude I for all three teachers. This difference is too great to be due to chance alone.

In the three way interaction between teacher, sex, and group, again results show that sex had a powerful effect. Table 4 shows that the mean scores for females in all groups except the experimental group of teacher one were significantly higher than the mean scores for the males. In the experimental group of teacher one, the mean score of the females was barely less (40.00) than the mean score for the males (40.22).

The results from the post Attitude II measure reported in Table 7 again support the strong sex effect in this study. Data in Table 7 shows that all males in the experimental group scored significantly higher than the males in the control group.

There may be several explanations for the strong sex effect in this study. My observation in the classroom has lead me to believe that generally students view females as the better writers.

This viewpoint becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Females who believe that they can be successful writing students enter the classroom with a more positive attitude which is substantiated by the pre test means in Appendix J. On the other hand, males who believe that they are not as good at writing, have a less positive attitude toward that task. Again this is confirmed by the pre test means in Appendix J.

This is perhaps an attitude unknowingly reinforced by female teachers in elementary and middle schools and continued in high school. Of the three teachers participating in this study, teachers two and three were females and the mean scores of the females in their experimental and control groups were significantly higher than the mean scores of the males in both experimental and control groups. (see Table 4) Teacher one was male and the mean score (40.41) for the females in his experimental group was almost the same as the mean score score (40.22) for the males in the experimental group. Inspection of the control group for teacher one shows a return to the higher female mean score (38.75) when compared to the mean score (33.50) of the males in the control group.

This data seems to suggest that we as educators need to be aware of the conscious and unconscious signals that we seem to be giving students in the classroom. We need to be aware that males come into the writing classroom with less positive attitudes and perhaps need to have extra encouragement as they approach the

writing process. Awareness of this situation may be the best deterrent to reinforcement.

In addition I have observed that English departments on the high school level are usually dominated by female teachers. In the 13 member English department at the school in which this study was conducted, the ratio of male to female is four to nine or 30% male. Teacher one was a 6'4" athletic football coach who exhibited a strong male image. I think that students need to have strong male models in the English classroom. They need to see a male teacher who is sensitive about literature and excited about writing. With a strong male model in the English classroom, male student writers would perhaps begin to have a more positive attitude about writing. Couple that with a peer evaluation group and the data (see Table 4) seems to suggest that male and female attitudes toward writing will equalize.

As stated previously, it had been hypothesized in this study that peer evaluation would improve attitude toward writing. Inspection of individual items on the instruments, it was hypothesized, would show an increase in mean scores of each item for the students in the experimental group that would not be duplicated in the control group. This pattern of increase for each item, reflecting an improvement in attitude toward writing, is shown in the data in Tables 5 and 8. However, before a student can develop a more positive attitude toward writing, he needs to reduce his fear of it.

As stated in the introduction and substantiated by this study, writing frightens many students. At least half of the students who participated in this study agree that writing frightens them. The pre test mean for item four, I become frightened when I have to write, shows this. The pre test means for the experimental group was 3.14 and the pre test means for the control group was 2.94. (see Table 5)

There was, however, a substantial increase in the mean of the experimental group after peer evaluation. The post test mean of item four increased from 3.14 to 3.20. Inspection of the control group data shows no change in the mean of item four, staying at 2.94 both pre and post. This seems to suggest that peer evaluation assisted in reducing that fear of writing. This should be a signal to writing teachers as a place to begin in the rebuilding of those fragile attitudes toward writing.

Items nine and ten both deal with revision and inspection of the data for the experimental and control groups shows an increase in the means for both groups. The experimental group increased from a pre test mean of 3.10 to a post test mean of 3.12. (see Table 5) The control group increased from a pre test mean of 3.07 to a post test mean of 3.10. The increase was almost the same, .02 for the experimental and .03 for the control group.

On the surface this would seem to suggest that peer evaluation made no difference in the area of revision. But when this result is considered in the light of the results from item four, it may

suggest that some students in the control group rewrote due to the fear of failure they associated with writing. And that rather than suggesting that peer evaluation did not make a difference, it perhaps suggests that without the support of a peer group, students continue to be fearful about their writing, sense that they have to do something and, therefore, rewrite.

Another explanation may be the interpretation of the word rewrite. In the experimental group the word rewrite meant that the student rewrote based on the comments, suggestions and improvements made by the peer evaluation group. The subsequent rewritten draft or second draft should be a higher quality draft, a much improved piece of writing. For the control group the word rewrite may have simply meant copying the paper over in ink as that was part of the directions for this study. In this case the increase in post means of the control group would not have the same impact as the increase in post means of the experimental group. A suggestion, therefore, for further use of this instrument would be to qualify the word rewrite so that it could not be misunderstood to mean simply a recopying.

Returning to the results of the experimental group for items nine and ten, it should be encouraging for teachers to note that the results indicated an increase in the intention to rewrite. When rewrite means taking into consideration the comments and suggestions from peer evaluators, it can be expected that the subsequent draft would be an improved piece of writing. It seems

that this would reinforce the student's positive attitude toward writing and would help reduce that fear of writing.

Items 11 - 14 all show an increase for the experimental group and a decrease for the control. The only exception is item 13 which involves reading of writing to the whole class. For that item the mean for the experimental group stayed the same; however, the control group followed the same pattern as the rest of the items for the control group, it decreased. All of these items begin with the words I like which I think is an important distinction when considering writing. Before continuing the discussion of items 11 - 14, it would be helpful to consider first the results of item one and then look at the results of items 11 - 14 in the light of the results of item one.

The results of item one, I find writing is a pleasant task, indicate that students in both experimental and control groups do not find writing a pleasant task. The pre test means for the experimental group was 2.72 and 2.41 for the control. Yet, when the students were asked questions about specific areas of the writing process (items 11 - 14), the results of the experimental group showed a pattern of increase from pre to post. Item 11 increased from 2.11 to 2.18; item 12 increased from 1.96 to 2.18; item 13 stayed the same at 1.52; and item 14 increased from 2.49 to 2.63.

When these results are considered with the consistent decrease pre to post of the control group, it would seem to suggest that peer evaluation does have a positive effect on what the student

likes concerning writing. This was perhaps not reflected in the results from item one because writing for so long has had negative connotations for students and writing at times can be painful, hard work even for the best writers. Perhaps the word pleasant is not the proper word to use. Researchers who further investigate this area might want to reword item one.

The results of items 11-14, however, reflect a result much different than the results of item one and perhaps present a much truer picture of the change in attitude for the writing student in this study. Students who like to share their writing, who like to read classmates' papers and offer advice are placing themselves in a situation that is favorable for writing. Again the importance of the word like and an increase in means pre to post for these items is a signal to educators about the value of peer evaluation.

Item 15, I think my writing is improving, shows an increase in the mean of the experimental group from 3.05 in the pre test to 3.17 in the post test. The control group shows no change, staying at 3.16. Again the self-fulfilling prophecy seems to be in effect. Students who think (using the vocabulary of item 15) that their writing is improving will be more willing to work at it than students who think that what they are doing makes no difference at all. The results indicate that the students in the experimental group think that their writing is improving after peer evaluation whereas the students in the control group do not think their writing is improving. This represents another signal to writing teachers. Why not fill writing programs with techniques that reinforce

students' positive attitudes about their writing, that reinforce the idea that their writing is improving? The results from this item are another reason to include peer evaluation in the writing program.

The results from items one and two bear further discussion. As stated previously, item one, I find writing is a pleasant task, shows a decrease in the item mean for the experimental group from a pre test mean of 2.72 to a post test mean of 2.66. The control group shows a slight, however not significant, increase from a pre test mean of 2.41 to a post test mean of 2.42. Item two, I avoid writing, if possible, also shows a decrease in the experimental group from a pre test mean of 2.68 to a post test mean of 2.61. The mean of the control group, however, shows a more substantial decrease from a pre test mean of 2.58 to a post test mean of 2.41.

These results would seem to indicate that despite the positive results of this study with peer evaluation, writing teachers still have a long way to go before they can convince students that writing can be and, in fact, is a pleasant task under the right circumstances, and that writing is not something that has to be avoided. Peer evaluation can make a considerable difference in turning this attitude around as shown by the results of this study.

Suggestions for future research would be to conduct this study over a longer period of time. My speculation is that continued use of peer evaluation in a writing program would lead to more significant changes in attitudes. It is suggested that continued

success with peer evaluation would decrease that fear of writing and would eventually make writing, if not a pleasant task, at least one that would not be avoided.

The last area for discussion is the post test for writing fluency. It had been initially hypothesized that the post test for writing fluency, a count of words, would be higher for the experimental group than for the control group. It was hypothesized that students who had participated in the peer evaluation process would benefit in a number of ways. They would have a chance to hear other students' writing on the same subject. They would have a chance to have their writing commented on by their peers. This, it was hypothesized, would encourage these ninth graders to take that first draft and expand it. It would provide for them student models of ways to add specific detail to their writing. It would provide the impetus to work with their writing. As stated in the introduction, ninth graders often feel that they can't write and that what they do write is not very good. The positive and powerful influence of their peers, it was hypothesized, would show them that they could write. In addition the peer evaluation process would give them the tools and the models with which to do that.

This researcher expected that the proof of this happening would be an increase in the number of words written on the final draft, speculating that if ninth graders were afraid to write and thought that they could not write, then surely when they realized

they could, it would result in an increased number of words on the final draft. Their writing would become more fluent.

As stated in Chapter III, a count of words was perhaps not the best measure for fluency but this researcher thought it would at least show a loosening up or a lessening of the fear most ninth graders associate with writing. In addition it was thought that peer evaluation would supply the catalyst for that to happen.

What, in effect, did happen is perhaps just as important and definitely worthy of further investigation. The group means for the post test count of words was lower for all three teachers in the experimental group than it was in the control group. Although this is not a significant finding, it definitely reflects a trend.

One explanation for this trend is that peer evaluation aids the student writer in tightening up his writing. His peer evaluators may have been helpful in suggesting parts of his writing that wandered off the subject, or parts that rambled, or parts that did not add anything to the movement of the piece of writing. Tightening writing is a goal of all writing teachers and perhaps the peer evaluation group was able to assist in this process. That would explain the consistently lower count of words on the post test measure in the experimental group.

This study showed that peer evaluation promotes positive attitudes toward writing. There is statistical and case evidence that students who peer evaluate have a significantly more positive attitude toward writing than students who do not peer evaluate.

This study showed that females have a significantly more positive attitude toward writing than males. In addition this study suggests that peer evaluation may lead to a tightening of writing rather than an increase in the number of words.

The results of this study have made research exciting for this researcher. Peer evaluation is a process I have been using with my classes for the last several years. It is a process that I see working in the classroom on a daily basis. When I hear students who have received their papers back from the teacher thank their peer group for the suggestions they had given, I know it is working. When I hear students who haven't been able to finish peer evaluating in class plan to meet on a Saturday afternoon at one of their homes so that they can continue, I know it is working. And when means and analysis of covariance prove statistically that peer evaluation does work, then it is a reason for not only this researcher to get excited but for all writing teachers to get excited! It is a sound reason for teachers to use peer evaluation in their classrooms. It is a chance to improve those attitudes toward writing and perhaps, if used early enough, to prevent those negative attitudes from ever forming.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study show that peer evaluation is working; however, more research needs to be conducted in this area in order to more closely identify how peer evaluation works best. Variations

of the peer evaluation process need to be investigated in order to refine the process to produce the most positive results in attitude change.

One suggestion for further research is to see if students who have peer evaluated over a longer period of time would go beyond the tightening process to writing more, not just quantity but quality. Investigation into this area would provide some valuable answers for writing teachers and would strengthen the rationale for peer evaluation groups in the classroom.

The results of this study encourage further research into the sex of teacher/sex of student interaction. Investigation in that area and its implications for the classroom would be valuable to the educator and administrator.

Because the key to understanding the implications of any study lies in the outcome measures, any further research in this area should look carefully at the instruments used. Analysis of the results of the Attitude II instrument was limited due to the inability of this researcher to obtain results from the original study or any subsequent studies using this instrument. Although this researcher had the scoring information supplied by Emig-King and presented in Chapter III, this researcher did not understand why movement toward five showed the direction of change, either increasing or decreasing, only for Cluster I and not for Cluster II and III. More complete information on this instrument would perhaps clarify this matter and should be sought before future research with this instrument. Further use

of Attitude I instrument should carefully check the wording of individual items to make sure that the vocabulary will be easily understandable to the subjects involved in the study.

Due to the almost non-existent research with peer evaluation and the significant results from this study, future research with peer evaluation is encouraged.

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Appendix A

Attitude I - Attitude Toward Writing Instrument

NAME_____

ATTITUDE TOWARD WRITING INSTRUMENT

DIRECTIONS: Please circle the letter or letters below to indicate how you honestly feel about each statement. If you strongly agree, circle SA; if you agree, circle A; if you disagree, circle D; and if you strongly disagree, circle SD.

1.	I find writing is a pleasant task.	SA	A	D	SD
2.	I avoid writing, if possible.	SA	A	D	SD
3.	I like to write on my own.	SA	A	D	SD
4.	I become frightened when I have to write.	SA	A	D	SD
5.	I enjoy the writing assignments my teacher gives me.	SA	A	D	SD
6.	I enjoy writing stories for the fun ot it.	SA	A	D	SD
7.	I enjoy writing poetry for the fun of it.	SA	A	D	SD
8.	I enjoy writing letters.	SA	A	D	SD
9.	I complete a writing assignment one time only and do no revising.	SA	A	D	SD
10.	I rewrite a writing assignment one or more times.	SA	A	D	SD
11.	I like to share my writing with family and friends.	SA	A	D	SD
12.	I like to read my writing to small groups of my classmates.	SA	A	D	SD
13.	I like to read my writing to the whole class.	SA	A	D	SD
14.	I like to read classmate's papers and offer advice.	SA	A	D	SD
15.	I think my writing is improving.	SA	A	D	SD

Appendix B

Attitude II - Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students - WASS

Sex: M___ or F___

EMIG - KING ATTITUDE SCALE FOR STUDENTS

For each item, circle your response.

1. I write letters to my family and friends.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
2. On my own I write stories, plays or poems.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
3. I voluntarily re-read and revise what I've written.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
4. When I have free time, I prefer writing to being with friends.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
5. I prefer topics I choose myself to ones the teacher gives.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
6. On the whole I like school.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
7. I use writing to help me study and learn new subjects.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
8. Girls enjoy writing more than boys do.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
9. I like what I write	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
10. Writing is a very important way for me to express my feelings.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
11. Doing workbook exercises helps me improve my writing.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
12. A student who writes well gets better grades in many subjects than someone who doesn't.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never

13. When I have free time, I prefer writing to reading.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
14. I do school writing assignments as fast as I can.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
15. I get better grades on topics I choose myself than on those the teachers assign.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
16. I write for the school newspaper, literary magazine, or yearbook.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
17. I voluntarily keep notes for school courses.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
18. When I have free time, I prefer writing to sports, games or hobbies.	Almost always	Oftem	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
19. I leave notes for my family and friends.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
20. The teacher is the most important audience for what I write in school.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
21. Students need to plan in writing for school themes.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
22. When I have free time, I prefer writing to watching television.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
23. I write better than I speak.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
24. Good writers spend more time revising than poor writers.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
25. I accept positions in groups that involve writing.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never

26. I write better than I read.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
27. I spend more time on a piece of writing I do outside school than one I do as an assignment.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
28. Studying grammar helps me improve my writing.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
29. I'd rather write than study literature.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
30. I share what I write for school with family and friends.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
31. I write public figures like my congressman or mayor.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
32. I write graffiti.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
33. In class, I share what I write with other members of the class.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
34. When I have free time, I prefer writing to listening to music.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
35. Teachers give poor grades to papers that have misspellings.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
36. Writing for others is more important than expressing myself.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
37. I can put off doing assigned writing until the last minute and still get a good grade.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never

38. I must learn to write a good paragraph before I can write an entire theme.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
39. I keep a journal or diary.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never
40. I prefer writing to dramatics in English class.	Almost always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Almost never

Appendix C

Memory Chain

Memory Chain for Personal Narrative: How I Overcame a Disability/Problem

Definition for Disability/problem:

physical: physical defect or impairment, severe illness, severe injury, surgery, learning disability.

emotional: divorce, moving, death, broken friendship

Memory Chain

List your answers to the following questions. Teacher should allow enough time between each item for the student to respond. Use your own judgement. Do not proceed to number 2 before every student has something down for number 1.

1. Name your disability or problem. Write it down. Be specific.
2. How old were you?
3. Describe the disability/problem in detail.
4. Did you find out about the disability/problem or did someone else tell you? If so, who? What did they say? Use exact quotes if possible.
5. How did you feel when you first noticed or found out about the disability/problem?
6. How did others react to you?
7. What did you do to try to solve the problem or disability?
8. What is one example of a solution you tried? Did it work? If it didn't, why not?
9. What did you tell yourself to help yourself over this problem?
10. What did others tell you that helped to solve the problem? Who were they? Use exact quotes if possible.
11. How did you respond to their help?
12. Has the disability/problem been solved? If so, how?

13. Has this experience changed your life at all? How? Are you different now?

14. What, if anything, have you learned from your experience?

Teacher should tell students that the responses to the memory chain constitute the pre-writing for this personal narrative. Students should begin writing the first draft, skipping lines and on one side of the paper only.

Appendix D

Model Paper

June 4 5:30 a.m.

"Our Linda was killed in a car wreck this morning," Ricky said as her outstretched arms searched for me. Disbelief hit and each word, a knot of anger, dropped to my stomach. I stood there dumbly holding the partially open screen door. "Our bright shining star..." Linda's mother murmured as my arms encircled her slight shoulders and her wracking sobs cemented our grief.

We held on to each other for a long time. It seemed ludicrous to hear the birds begin to chirp in a new day when the light had just gone out of all the days for Linda.

Jim, Linda's father, standing on the edge of the porch in a barely audible voice asked, "Why Joyce? Tell me why!"

There was no answer to a question like that. My only response, as the knot of anger continued to build in my stomach, was to hold Ricky tighter. My indignant mind screamed, "No! Why Linda?" But I said nothing as Ricky murmured into my shoulder, "We wanted to tell you ourselves. We know how much she meant to you, how much you meant to her. We didn't want you to hear it from someone else."

We held on to each other for a long time that spring morning. The details of how it had happened were not important to me. I had lost a friend.

In my mind, I saw her walking into my classroom to aid each day usually dressed more professionally than I. "Hi Mrs. K.," she would say, "what's up today?"

In my mind, I saw her strong hands caressing the keys of her Baldwin, making "Moonlight Sonata" more beautiful than I'd ever heard it.

In my mind, I saw her as Mother Superior, radiant and serene as she confidantly sang "Maria" in the spring musical.

In my mind, I heard her latest silly joke and "Don't you get it Mrs. K.?"

It has been six months now, a long six months and my heart no longer denies the truth. Yet I still see Linda. A bright new star shines in the darkness and reminds me to laugh, to appreciate, to love while there's time.

Appendix E

Criteria for the Personal Narrative

Criteria for the Personal Narrative: How I Overcame a Disability/Problem

Content

1. Identify the disability/problem.
2. Identify how you felt about the disability/problem.
3. Tell how you overcame the disability/problem.
4. Tell what you have learned or how you have changed as a result of this experience.

Technique

1. Begin with an attention getter
2. Use an appropriate, interesting title
3. Use realistic dialogue

Appendix F

Notes for Class Presentation of Peer Evaluation Process

Day 1

1. Discuss what a critic (evaluator) is.
   A. What qualifies a person to be a critic? (film critic, book reviewer, etc.)
      1. You have to know something about the subject.
         ex. I would not be qualified (I don't know enough about films) to be a film critic.
      2. We all know something about this subject (overcoming a disability/problem); we are all qualified because we all wrote on this topic.
2. Responsibilities of a GOOD critic.
   A. You must be unbiased (honest). Will it help the writer if you tell him that his paper is good just because that person is your friend? Will that help his paper? The reverse is also true.
   B. You must be as professional as possible. You have a serious task to perform, a job to do. No fooling around should enter into the process.
   C. You must understand the importance of positive comments. Look for positive ways to tell the writer about things that are missing in his writing.
   D. You must understand the importance of letting the writer know how you felt and why. If the writer thinks he is communicating a particular thing and he is not, you must let him know that. It is the responsibility of the audience, you!
   E. Give suggestions for improvement. The objective of peer evaluation is to help the writer improve his writing.
3. Responsibilities of the writer.
   A. You must have your paper ready on time.
   B. You must write legibly so that the paper can be read.

C. You must react calmly to criticism and remember that it is an effort to help you improve your writing.

D. You must accept that the evaluation is not a personal attack.

E. MOST IMPORTANT: You will be using the evaluation as a basis to revise your writing.

4. There is a great deal of give and take responsibility going on in the process of peer evaluation. For the process to work both the evaluator and the writer must be giving 100% to the job.

5. Hand out the peer response sheet and go over the criteria for the assignment as listed on the response sheet.

6. Students will function as your peer group as you read the model paper written on the same topic. Students will be guided in making appropriate responses.

   A. The teacher will read the paper aloud.

   B. The students will be encouraged to give ORAL feedback based on the peer response sheet. Students will then write a letter on the back of the peer response sheet based on the items indicated on the sheet. This will be given to the writer to use in revising.

      NOTE: the peer response sheet will eventually be handed in with the writer's drafts so the teacher will have a record of the peer evaluator's comments and can give guidance as needed.

Days 2 - 5

1. Using the teacher read model, students will receive instructions and practice editing for mechanical and syntax errors.

   A. The teacher will pass out copies of the model which contains errors. Using the composition checklist which students have in their writing folders, they will read through the model and mark errors and make suggestions as appropriate. Allow enough time for students to complete (approximately 10-15 minutes).

B. Using the overhead projector, go through the model and the corrections that need to be made with the students contributing.

2. Explain the peer evaluation process that the students will go through. The process will take approximately three days to complete.

A. Announce the teacher selected triads. In putting triads together, the teacher should attempt to combine strengths and weaknesses of the students.

B. Each paper will be read aloud while the other two people in the triad listen. This reading aloud establishes ownership. Point out to students that when they own something, they usually care more about it. It also allows the reader/writer to evaluate as he reads.

1. Listeners will respond orally first. It is important for the writer to have some immediate oral feedback after he has "laid himself bare" to his peer group.

a. Listeners should be training themselves to listen carefully and to respond intelligently.

b. Using the peer response sheet, while the writer reads, jot down words, phrases, etc. that you like and questions that you have. Ask the writer to reread parts if necessary. Keep in mind the criteria for the assignment as you respons.

2. After oral response both editors in the triad should write a letter to the writer on the back of the response sheet including comments, questions and suggestions for the writer. Specific items to be included are on the response sheet. This letter is to be given to the writer and is to be used to revise the paper. When the writer turns in his final paper, all drafts and peer response sheets should be turned in together so

the student and teacher can see the whole process.

3. When everyone has responded orally and in written form to the content, papers will be exchanged within the triad and each one will read a paper for mechanical errors. Each student should sign his name to the paper he checks. Exchange papers a second time; students should sign name again. Each paper should have two signatures representing two edits.
   a. Emphasize to students that they responded first to content because that is most important. You must have something to say that is worth listening to.
   b. It will take at least one day to read all papers and respond orally to them. Students should be encouraged to revise based on oral feedback for the next day so that the edit for mechanical errors is on the revised draft.
   c. Any rewrite that is done after the mechanical edit should be re-edited.
   d. Emphasize the importance of using the triad as a support group.
      ex. A student with severe spelling problems should have his final draft checked one last time before it is turned in.

C. During this process the teacher should walk around the room, giving assistance where needed, spending time with each group.

Appendix G

Peer Evaluation Sheet

WRITER_____

EDITOR_____

Peer Evaluation Sheet for the Personal Narrative: How I Overcame a Disability/Problem.

1. Is there an attention getter? Yes No

   If not, could you suggest an appropriate way to get started that would catch your attention?_____

   _____

   _____

2. The part I like best is (quote words or phrases directly from the paper).____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. Identify how the writer overcomes his disability/problem._____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. I wish there were more details about (be specific)_____

   _____

   _____

   _____

5. Is the dialogue realistic? Yes No

6. What has the writer learned from overcoming this disability/problem?

   _____

_____

_____

7. One part that was unclear to me or one part that I didn't understand was_____

_____

_____

8. Does the conclusion satisfy you? Yes No
If not, what do you still have questions about or what else do you want to know? _____

_____

_____

9. Is the title appropriate? Yes No
If not, suggest one._____

Appendix H

Composition Checklist

COMPOSITION CHECKLIST

/ = one error of this type in the paper

\ = more than one error of this type in the paper

	DATE								Warriner's
AWK	AWKWARD CONSTRUCTION								p. 243-274
~~ß~~	UNNECESSARY CAPITAL								p. 441-458
ⓐ	CAPITAL NEEDED								p. 441-458
QU	INCORRECT USE OF QUOTES								p. 505-514
X	SUPERFLUOUS COMMA								p. 463-483
⊙	COMMA ERROR								p. 463-486
S V AGR	SUB-VERB AGREEMENT								p. 130-145
N P AGR	NOUN-PRONOUN AGREEMENT								p. 147-149
¶	PARAGRAPH DIVISION NEEDED								p. 279-280
NO ¶	NO PARAGRAPH NEEDED								p. 279-280
FRAG	SENTENCE FRAGMENT								p. 246-253
APOS	APOSTROPHE NEEDED								p. 516-527
'	NO APOSTROPHE								p. 516-527
TRANS	TRANSITION NEEDED								p. 301-309
TS	TOPIC SENTENCE NOT CLEAR OR MISSING								p. 280-290
VT	VERB TENSE								p. 162-164
WC	WORD CHOICE								p. 591-652
WW	WRONG WORD								p. 220-239

CF	COMMA FAULT										p. 463-486
FUS	FUSED SENTENCE										p. 254-255
FOC	FOCUS NOT CLEAR										p. 279-310
SP	SPELLING ERROR										p. 619-652

PAPER TITLE

WORDS I HAVE MISSPELLED

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix I

Student Directions for the Peer Evaluation Process

Student Directions for the Peer Evaluation Process

1. The writer should read the paper aloud while the other two in the triad listen and make notes on the front of the peer response sheet. A second reading may be needed.
2. There should be at least five minutes of oral feedback based on the areas listed on the peer response sheet. During this time the writer should also ask questions about parts of his paper that he feels he needs help with. There should be a dialogue going on between the writer and the peer evaluator.
3. After oral feedback the peer evaluator should turn over the peer response sheet and write a letter to the writer covering the areas on the peer response sheet and any other suggestions he might have. This is to be given to the writer to be used in the revising process. The writer must turn in these peer response sheets with his final paper. The peer evaluator will be evaluated on the job he has done.
4. Each writer should go through the same process in the order indicated in numbers one through three.
5. Writers are encouraged to rewrite with the recommendations of their peer evaluators in mind before the next step. If there have been changes, it will be necessary to take time for a second reading to the triad.
6. When all writers have read and have had their papers peer evaluated for content, papers should be exchanged and will be edited for mechanical errors. Use the composition checklist

and consult the dictionary and teacher as needed. Sign your name to the paper you have edited.

7. Exchange papers and edit one more time. Sign your name to the paper you have edited.
8. When the writer has received both oral and written feedback and has had his paper edited twice for mechanical errors, he is ready to write the final draft in blue or black ink, single spaced, one side of the paper only.
9. The final draft should be handed in with all previous drafts and both peer response sheets in the following order. Final draft on top, previous drafts in descending order of when they were written and peer response sheets on the bottom.

Appendix J

Original Pre test Means an Standard Deviation for Attitude I Instrument for Male and Feale Students in the Experimental and Control Groups Instructed y Teachers 1, 2 and 3.

Original Pre test Means and Standard Deviation for Attitude I Instrument for Male and Female Students in the Experimental and Control Groups Instructed by Teachers 1, 2 and 3.

		Experimental		Control	
		$\bar{x}$	s	$\bar{x}$	s
Teacher 1	M	37.44	4.30	35.83	11.05
	F	40.41	4.08	39.00	5.73
Teacher 2	M	37.20	5.92	36.18	7.84
	F	39.42	5.73	42.71	5.19
Teacher 3	M	36.50	5.70	35.64	8.37
	F	39.59	5.23	40.93	7.07

Appendix K

Parental Consent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Second semester I will be finishing research for my Master's thesis. My research will measure the effects of peer evaluation on writing fluency and attitude toward writing. I will be collecting writing samples from seven freshman classes, and subject to your approval, your child will be included.

The research will be conducted in the following manner. First a questionnaire concerning the student's attitude toward writing will be administered. Next a writing topic will be assigned. After writing the first draft, four classes will go through peer evaluation training. Then all seven classes will write a second draft. A second questionnaire on attitude toward writing will be administered after the second draft. Except for the administration of the attitude surveys, all the other activities involved with this study are part of the freshman curriculum.

Any research that can lead to positive results in student writing is important. I hope that you will permit your child to participate. Any child not wishing to participate will be excused without any negative consequences. Please be assured that your child's name will not be associated in any way with the research findings. Do not hesitate to call me (school - 897-2331 or home - 681-2678) if you have any questions about this study. I appreciate your co-operation.

Sincerely,

Joyce Katstra

_____

Signature of parent or guardian agreeing to let student participate

_____

Student's Name

"END OF DOCUMENT"